

University of Reading Collection Management Policy

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Purpose

The Collection Management Policy is designed to support and supplement the Library's Content Principles. The Collection Management Policy sets out detail about how we manage and maintain existing collections to ensure appropriateness for teaching and research, as well as guardianship of collections that are of significance to the University of Reading. This policy includes any subject-specific requirements related to content.

The Library's aim is to acquire, enable access to, and manage and promote sources of information needed by the University for research, teaching and learning. Library sources of information are seen as a valuable strategic resource to be acquired and managed efficiently and to be readily accessible and relevant to potential users.

Approach

The University Library is the principal central provider of sources of academic information for the University.

The Library's approach to acquiring content is set out in the Content Principles document. The majority of content is bought in response to items listed on the University's Reading Lists systems, and via larger 'packages' of electronic content

(electronic journals, electronic books and databases) some of which are cross-subject collections and others which are more subject-specific. The Library is allocated a budget each year to purchase resources to serve the University and the final decision on selection is made by the Library.

University Museums and Collections collect, store and provide access to a range of object, archive, Manuscripts and Special Collections and rare book sources. These services have their own Collection Development Policies. Other information and resource centres devoted to the needs of specific groups or particular subjects, such as departmental libraries, influence the acquisition decisions of the University Library, and the University Library will develop ongoing cooperative relationships with all of them so that unnecessary duplication can be avoided.

Collection Management

Selection and Acquisition

The Library budget is a centralised budget with overall allocations for books (inclusive of print and ebooks), subscriptions and electronic resources. Funds are not allocated to specific schools or departments.

The responsibility and final decision for spending the budget allocation lies with the Library. We have a Content Decisions Group with representatives from Academic Liaison, Collections and Research Engagement that meets regularly to discuss Library content and requests for new content. Academic staff can ask their Academic Liaison Librarian to submit a request for new subscription content on their behalf and write a supporting business case. Request for book purchases come via Reading Lists reviews, or via request forms and are assessed by Collections staff.

The following factors are considered when decision-making about content:

- The relevance of the content to teaching and/or research
- Impact – numbers of students or researchers the content will benefit/provide for and is there an interdisciplinary element to the content
- Accessibility – is the content accessible to all UoR users
- Sustainability – is the content from a supplier with sustainable credentials
- Cost – is the cost justifiable and affordable
- Open – is the content open access or of benefit to open publishing in any way

All recommendations from Schools should be made to the Library by the end of April every year. Money cannot be carried over between years, so it is important that all funds are spent within the financial year. At the end of May, any unspent funds may be

collected together and used to purchase resources – the Content Decisions Group will decide which resources are acquired.

Alternatives to Acquisition

Borrowing resources from other collections is often a satisfactory alternative to purchase for non-course materials, particularly when demand is limited.

- Inter-Library Loans: Staff and Research Postgraduates can order items online. Items can often be delivered electronically direct to the user or are collected from the Library where this is not possible. This service is available and promoted to all University members.
- Visiting other libraries: other library access may provide satisfactory access to material without incurring acquisition costs. The SCONUL (Society of College, National and University Libraries) Access Scheme provides access and borrowing rights for academic staff, research students, taught postgraduate students, and part-time undergraduate students at over 170 member institutions in the UK and Ireland. The SCONUL Vacation Access scheme gives taught course students reference only vacation access to SCONUL member libraries. The University Library will continue to participate in reciprocal access schemes.

Relegation and disposal

The University of Reading needs to have a robust collection management process to ensure maximum efficiency of space and usability of the collections it holds.

A 'content lifecycle' is necessary to enable the Library to manage the stock it holds to maximise use of physical space and ensure that it holds content relevant to teaching, learning and research at the University; whilst also acknowledging and maintaining unique historic collections owned by the Library.

Defined criteria for stock management:

- Low use printed material which is of likely future research use, or is historically significant, may be relegated from the main collection open access shelves to closed access storage.
- Items which have ceased to be used, or are used infrequently, and are not relevant to current or anticipated academic needs, may be withdrawn from stock and disposed of. Infrequent use is generally interpreted as no more than once in the last five years. Access to e-resources may also be removed, especially in the case of those e-books which become outdated or are superseded.
- Printed versions of sources which are available electronically may be withdrawn from stock if the digital version is judged to be secure and well archived, for

example the JSTOR archive or purchased online journal backfiles. Some printed reference sources, such as abstracts and indexes, may be withdrawn if available electronically.

- Printed items will not be withdrawn from stock on the grounds that they duplicate electronic versions if the electronic version does not provide an adequate substitute, for example: there is unsatisfactory quality of reproduction; fold out charts or maps are not reproduced electronically; information does not print out satisfactorily; or because of any other physical characteristic of the content where the hard copy might be required instead of the electronic version.
- Superseded textbooks in old editions and duplicate copies will be withdrawn unless there are specific reasons for retention.
- Withdrawn stock may be disposed of by sale to secondhand booksellers or through the Library's Recycle UoR reading scheme, or via book sale to University users; by sale or gift to other institutions or charities; or destroyed using environmentally friendly means. When printed journals are withdrawn they can be offered to Schools and Departments and, if accepted, ownership will be transferred from the University Library.
- Printed material identified for potential disposal will be checked for 'uniqueness' against national databases such as Jisc's Library Hub catalogue – to align with national print book collection schemes and to ensure rare material is not disposed of. We will also participate in national collections schemes such as British Library's UKRR (UK Research Reserve) and the RLUK-led UK Print Book Collection to ensure that rarer stock is preserved.
- Printed material will also be assessed against whether they constitute part of 'special collections' and if so shall be transferred to Museums and Collections to ensure they are stored and managed in line with their Collections Policies.
- 'Unique' items may be held in offsite storage to ensure library space is used for relevant and high-use collections.
- The University Librarian takes the final decisions on the withdrawal and disposal of printed material.
- Items that are damaged will be assessed to determine whether disposal, repair or replacement is appropriate.

Electronic Resources

The Library operates under an e-first policy meaning that we prioritise acquiring electronic versions of materials where possible and available, as electronic access can be more convenient, and accessible; it also provides 24/7 access to materials unlike physical versions of content. Where an electronic version is not available the Library will seek to acquire a physical version.

It should be noted that access to the majority of e-resources is licensed to the University on terms which exclude non-members. University members may access licensed e-

resources remotely; this includes, for example, current University of Reading staff and students working or studying overseas. University of Reading Malaysia students will be able to access the majority of e-resources. Students enrolled on University courses delivered elsewhere, for example overseas at a partner institution, will not have automatic access to our resources. Arrangements for these courses will need to be discussed with the Library.

Long-term security of access will be considered when purchasing e-resources. Any special hardware or other technical requirements and specifications will be taken into account when new electronic resources are being considered, and may affect decisions to acquire.

A scanning service to access high demand readings is provided by the University Library, within the terms of the CLA Higher Education scanning license. This makes digital copies of book chapters or journal articles available in those cases where there is no commercially available digital copy (subject to copyright restrictions – not all items will be available for scanning).

Conservation and Security

The Collection Management Policy assumes a commitment to consistent and effective conservation, preservation and security. The Library has a Business Continuity Plan and Salvage Plan Incident Plan which includes operational plans for: risk assessment; environmental monitoring and control; disaster control and relief; and maintaining continuity of service in the event of an incident. Existing security systems will be regularly reviewed.

Subject specific areas of strength

Subjects in which the University of Reading is particularly strong or for which the Library holds significant collections:

- Archaeology
- Agriculture
- Food and nutritional sciences
- Italian studies/Italian history
- Meteorology
- Typography & graphic communication

Library collections that are deemed significant to the University - whether due to their academic strength or their contribution to the institution's reputation - will be preserved and be subject to more rigorous considerations around disposal.